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AUTHOR Spangler, Mary S.
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ABSTRACT

Cost-saving considerations, the threat of declining enrollments, and efforts by community colleges to be responsive to their communities have created a temporary staff maintained on a relatively permanent and continuing basis. Between 1975 and 1983, roughly two new part-time positions were created for every new full-time position. Rather than fostering excellence, the extensive use of non-tenure track teachers compromises educational excellence by exploiting those teachers waiting for permanent positions. While the hiring of part-time instructors does carry cost and flexibility benefits, numerous problems arise when part-timers are unfamiliar with their institution's mission, philosophies, and academic policies and full-time faculty are forced to bear much of the administrative and advising burden generated by part-timers. Statistics collected from reading and writing examinations given at Los Angeles Valley College have shown that students taught by part-timers do not perform as well as students taught by full-timers. Because of the demands of other employment, part-timers may be unable, unprepared, or unwilling to give students the attention they require. Part-time instructors themselves rarely receive the financial compensation and fringe benefit packages offered to full-time instructors. In order to strengthen proficiency in part-time teachers, institutions should: (1) hire temporary faculty at least 4 months prior to service; (2) distribute information about policies and procedures; (3) recognize part-timers' professional status; (4) provide support services; (5) create a mentor program within the department; and (6) develop a meaningful orientation process. Institutional priorities must be reordered in order to solve the problems associated with part-time faculty. (JMC)

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Part-Time Faculty: Recognizing an Unprotected Minority

by

Mary S. Spangler

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Part-Time Faculty: Recognizing an Unprotected Minority

OVERVIEW

For the past twenty-five years I have been a permanent member of the Los Angeles Valley College English Department. So it is from this point of view that I approach the issue of the part-time faculty in higher education. I am not an administrator faced with adjusting to shrinking budgets or enrollments. I am not an adjunct teacher hoping to have at least one class to teach next semester or to be chosen if a tenure-track position becomes available. I am not a student trying to find my instructor for the purpose of discussing a class assignment or asking for a recommendation. My job is secure; my name is on my office door; my vote counts in developing department policy. Even so, the presence of this "secondary labor market" (Warme 201) of adjunct faculty seriously undermines my effectiveness to my students, my department, and my college.

The relationship between the part-time faculty and higher education has been an evolving one since the 1960s. At that time with the likelihood of "an expanding population and a decreasing number of comprehensively prepared persons available for full-time college teaching positions" (Gowin 1), there was a rationale for the use of part-time teachers. These "peripheral members" were most numerous in community colleges, and in the universities sampled in 1960 with fewer than 4,000 students, part-timers comprised approximately thirty-nine percent of the total teaching staff (Gowin 1).

According to Warme, even though funding was insufficient to support the expansion of the teaching staff, there was the expectation that the financial situation would eventually improve. Subsequently, enrollments were maintained. But coinciding with the funding crisis was "an over-supply of potential academics graduating from a higher education sector that had grown dramatically in the buoyant economy of the 1960s. Hence, the creation of cadres of part-timers was spurred by . . . a desire on the part

of graduates for any academic work . . . and the university's need for cheap labor" (201).

In the 1970s, in response to a projected decline in the number of college-age students and the persistent problem of underfunding, full-time tenure-track faculty were replaced with part-time positions (Franklin 15). This increase was also a response to a need created by the community colleges themselves. In an effort to be responsive to their communities and clientele, the colleges expanded the curriculum with noncredit courses in avocational, recreational, and personal areas, and staffed these classes with part-timers.

In 1970 the California State Education Code was changed so that after two years of satisfactory service, part-time teachers could be granted tenure. However, while the intent of the legislators was to "enrich community life by giving permanency and continuity to the service of the teacher" (qtd. in Lewis), what actually occurred was the reverse. Districts immediately instituted the one-year full-time assignment policy, with instructors being "demoted" to hourly pay after one year of full pay, benefits, and status. Thus districts saw an opportunity to satisfy the state by having fully credentialed personnel with teaching skills at bargain rates.

The decreasing enrollments that had been projected never developed in the community colleges. New populations of returning older students and increasing numbers of minority students filled the classrooms, and enrollments stabilized. But the issue of funding worsened, and instead of hiring full-time instructors, districts hired "'temporary employees,' oxymoronically, as permanent part-timers" (Lewis). The conflict of providing quality instruction within the constraints of financial realities once again returned.

Trying to protect their positions and improve their working conditions and pay rate, part-timers eventually unionized (Warme 210). Pressuring the administration, the unions went to court to argue an implied commitment to these teachers; the courts agreed and forced districts to offer tenure to those part-timers. In a 1977 California Court of Appeals decision involving the Peralta Federation of Teachers, Local 1603, and the Peralta Community College District, twelve part-time teachers who had taught at least sixty percent of a regular load were ruled eligible for tenure.

On the face of it, part-timers had won a victory; now they could look forward to tenure after two years of satisfactory service.

As Koltai warned in 1977, the desire of some part-timers to achieve tenure "created competition between part- and full-timers that work[ed] in favor of administrations and boards of trustees" ("King Solomon" 20). Ironically, now part-timers were limited in what they could do. In order to avoid the repetition of involuntarily increasing costs with permanent personnel, the administration responded by clearly identifying the limits of its relationship with this group of faculty. By restricting the number of hours per term in any given district, the district could legally maintain a pool of "permanent temporaries."

Before 1977 a non-tenured English instructor in the Los Angeles Community College District was exploited by teaching a full load semester after semester in one location at an hourly rate; today that individual is exploited by teaching several limited loads semester after semester in several locations, still at an hourly rate. These are people who identify themselves as teachers and wish to teach as a career. Thus while a few part-timers won tenure, in reality the vast majority weakened their positions. In addition, the fragmentation of positions opened the way for a flood of new part-timers and additional, unanticipated abuses.

By the end of 1985, there were more than 250,000 part-time positions in higher education. New faculty found that the only entrance available to a career in academe was via these positions. But at the same time this large group remained virtually unacknowledged and invisible because its members did not have time to study and report on their situation (Tuckman 98). As a consequence, information about them is limited.

Cost-saving efforts, the threat of declining enrollments, and the attempts of the community colleges to be responsive to their communities have created a temporary staff maintained on a relatively permanent and continuing basis. But rather than fostering excellence, the extensive use of non-tenure track teachers represents, according to the American Association of University Professors, "a retreat from excellence" (qtd. in Clausen 4) because it exploits teachers waiting for that permanent position to materialize. What was designed as a temporary solution to an anticipated problem of declining enrollments that never actually

materialized has, ironically, become the problem itself (Franklin 18; Denham 2). For example,

> thirty-seven percent of all teachers in higher education are now on part-time contracts and the rate of growth in part-time hiring has been almost one percent a year since 1972. If it continues . . . in two generations the teaching staffs of colleges and universities will be entirely composed of part-time faculty members. (Denham 1)

The practice today seems to be that "half or more of the basic general education courses offered every semester by every college in the nation [are] being taught by adjuncts" (Twigg 5).

The relationship between this group of professionals and the institutions that they are loosely associated with has been variously and imaginatively described in professional journals. Euphemistically by those who manage the system, part-timers may be referred to as "a cushion against retrenchment" (Albert and Watson 73). Disparagingly by those who are the "victims" of the system, they are depicted with analogies that reflect an underlying sense of powerlessness. These range from the "pedagogical peonage" of a feudal society (Lewis) to more current forms of exploitation, as in "docile educational migratory workers" (Curzon-Brown 195) who are engaged in "academic piecework" (Denham 1). Using imagery borrowed from social institutions, part-timers might identify themselves as a "resentful minority" who are the "'homeless' of the academic world" (Twigg 5, 10) living the life of "academic marginality" (Warme 201). These metaphors capture the exploitive aspect of the part-timers' plight.

Indeed, the current heavy reliance on part-time faculty--especially in the community colleges--to help meet the needs of higher education is creating serious problems that are adversely affecting the quality of the educational system. After identifying those who are members of the part-time faculty, this discussion reviews the benefits that such a faculty offers. Then an analysis of the problems created by a part-time faculty is followed by some recommendations for responding to the issue. (References to Los Angeles Valley College, a community college in the Los Angeles Community College District, are used only to illustrate the scope of the problem.)

IDENTIFYING THE PART-TIME FACULTY

One problem inherent with the part-time situation is the difficulty of defining what is meant by the term *part-time*; consequently, measuring the academic employment of part-timers is no small feat. First, surveys generally identify the number of **positions** (full-time-equivalents or FTEs), not the number of **persons** filling those positions. In addition, there are differences among different institutions with regard to their understanding of the term *part-time*, their ability to identify the number on the payroll, and their willingness to release the information to outsiders. Furthermore, changes in the numbers occur because the number of institutions reporting the data changes (Tuckman 103). The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) defines the phrase *part-time faculty* as those employed by a "short contract with no guarantee of being rehired for the next academic year or term" (*Supplemental Report*).

Other complications in defining this group involve differentiating between part-time, temporary, and probationary. Because part-timers are often referred to as FTE positions, the ratio between part-timers and full-timers can be deceptive. Thus there is little chance of knowing exactly how many people are being counted. For example, if a full-time teaching position is twelve hours, one FTE position can involve one, two, three, or four separate individuals. Excluding the pay rate, the difference between full-time and part-time becomes an issue of the number of hours spent teaching, holding office hours, correcting papers, assigning grades, attending meetings, doing committee work, and participating in staff development (Koltai "Part-Time"). One recurring theme in the studies and literature on this subject, according to Miller, is the demographics of the part-time population: size, functions, part-time versus full-time members, motives for teaching, and analysis on the needs for orientation and staff development (5).

What characterizes part-timers in general is a noticeable heterogeneity. If one considers that there are different reasons for functioning as an adjunct instructor, then it is easier to identify when this type of position is desirable rather than involuntary. Excluding graduate students who are teaching assistants, the Modern Language Association

classifies part-timers into two types of contractual relationships with their institution. One is the clearly temporary members. These are described as independent or "willing" because their position meets their individual needs. Most likely they have full-time employment outside the institution and teach to satisfy a personal need or share their expertise (Warme 201, 203; Benjet 40).

The second group is composed of those who teach from year to year and become, in effect, permanent. Instructors in this group are also identified as dependent, "reluctant," or "hopeful," primarily because they want to enter into a full partnership in higher education. However, their career options in teaching may involuntarily be limited by a downturn in the economy, a decline in the demand for their expertise, or a surplus in the number of job seekers within their field (Tuckman 99, 106). In any event, as a group they are not irresponsible or ineffective though they may be perceived that way by others and/or themselves. Indeed, their credentials, degrees, qualifications, and training are not essentially different.

Some part-timers exist as "hopefuls" for many years because they identify strongly with teaching as their profession but are unable to find full-time positions (Benjet 40). Data from the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges identify that about forty percent of part-time faculty continue to work in one district more or less permanently" (qtd. in CPEC, *Preparing* 178). Others are the new graduates who are acquiring teaching experience before a permanent position becomes available. They often put several teaching jobs together in order to earn a living. Those who exist this way have been dubbed "freeway flyers" in California because they teach in different districts, often many miles apart, in order to create a full-time schedule at hourly rate pay. The longer they remain temporary, the more likely they are to be locked into their involuntary status. At the university level are "non-tenure track instructors whose limited terms of service require that they move from institution to institution often after three to six years" (Franklin 15).

Despite their diversity, academic part-timers do share certain characteristics. According to Tuckman, they are usually better educated and more likely to be from middle-income families than other sectors of the economy. They experience job instability due to changing conditions in

academic labor markets rather than in the larger economy. These conditions include shifting student enrollments, fluctuating federal funds, and tightening budgets. Also, they attain "marginal" status among their colleagues but full status from their students (101). Warme refers to them as the "elite reserve of army labor" for whom "no clear niche has been carved out" (204).

From 1973 to 1976, in the California community colleges, part-time faculty increased annually by ten percent with seventy-seven percent of them employed full-time in another capacity and thus deriving the majority of income and benefits from those full-time positions. At the same time, seventy-two percent of community college instruction was handled by full-time faculty or by permanent instructors also wanting to teach extra classes. Therefore, the bulk of instruction was still carried by full-time faculty, and part-timers were fairly evenly distributed through all instructional categories (Koltai "Part-Time"). By 1977 there were 14,273 full-timers and 20,027 part-timers. The following chart shows that the major portion of faculty increases between 1972 and 1983 occurred in part-time faculty both at the two- and four-year institutions.

Positions in All Fields

	1972	1983	% increase
4 yr. part-time	75,000	127,000	69%
2 yr. part-time	44,000	127,000	189%
4 yr. full-time	308,000	374,000	21%
2 yr. full-time	72,000	93,000	29%

Source: Information contained in Franklin (16) and displayed here in table form.

Tuckman's figures show that between 1975 and 1983, the number of part-time positions at all institutions of higher education increased by 23 percent from 212,000 to 261,000. The number of full-time positions increased by only 5.5 percent from 446,000 to 471,000. For every new full-

time position, almost two new part-time positions were created. The "market share" of part-timers grew from thirty-two percent to thirty-six percent of the total positions in academe. Assuming that the persons in these positions taught only one-quarter of a full-time load, the positions they occupied represent the equivalent of over 12,200 new full-time positions (103-104).

Projections suggest that this trend is continuing. Estimates from the Center for Education Statistics identify the total number of full-time faculty at two- and four-year institutions decreasing from 456,000 in 1985 to 440,000 in 1986. During the same period, the number of part-time instructors increased from 254,000 in 1985 to 260,000 in 1986 (qtd. in Franklin 16).

In the California community colleges, according to CPEC,

> [w]hile the part-time faculty outnumber the full-time by almost a two-to-one margin, they teach 34.3 percent of the weekly student contact hours. Regular and contract faculty teach 59.3 percent on regular assignment with those teaching overloads accounting for the remaining 6.4 percent. Regular and contract faculty on regular assignment are averaging 15.0 weekly student contact hours (WSCH) in 1987-88 while the part-time faculty are averaging 5.3 hours with those teaching any overload averaging 4.7. About thirty-eight percent of the full-time regular and contract faculty members teach some overload. These are relatively constant averages for a seven-year period. (*Supplemental Report*)

The College Board reports that approximately sixty-seven percent of public two-year institutions used part-time faculty members to teach more than twenty-five percent of their courses in 1988-89 compared with twenty-two percent of public four-year institutions and thirty-eight of all independent institutions (Meyerson 13).

Now the number of part-time college instructors exceeds 300,000, and they often teach more than fifty percent of the classes at many two-year colleges (qtd. in Benjet 40). In 1988, California AB 1725 set a legal limit on the ratio of full-timers to part-timers to control this over-reliance on part-time faculty. According to this document, the balance

should be maintained at seventy-five percent full-time to twenty-five percent part-time. However, rather than being applied by disciplines or departments, the ratio is imposed at the campus level. In addition, the twenty-five percent represents FTE **positions**, not individual instructors.

According to these figures, Los Angeles Valley College was not in compliance for Spring 1990. Its total FTE was 300.49, including 205.70 regular positions and 94.79 hourly rate positions. The ratio of full-timers to part-timers was 68.3% to 31.7%. FTE part-time includes all hourly rate, whether non-tenured faculty or tenured faculty teaching an extra load. The English Department is also not aligned since it currently has a fifty-fifty ratio with nineteen full-timers and nineteen FTE part-timers. Closer scrutiny reveals that for the same period the part-time positions represented fifty different instructors teaching fifty-six classes or a two-to-five, not a three-to-one, ratio.

The career implications for part-time instructors are varied. Part-time positions may be a good transition between graduate training and full employment for inexperienced faculty (Eliason 6). This type of employment can also expand the range of career choice if it is voluntary. Those with family responsibilities, poor health, few remaining years, conflicting demands on time, a high preference for leisure, and a low tolerance for work are good candidates for a limited position (Tuckman 99). The hopeful part-timers, the ones most dissatisfied with a part-time position and viewing this type of employment as opening up further opportunities in academe, will find that their expectations often remain unfulfilled for at least five reasons:

- A career ladder rarely exists.
- Over eighty-five percent of the part-time positions reported to Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 1983 did not carry tenure.
- Part-timers rarely have normal salary progression over the course of their career; the salary differential between the two groups grows and creates a continuing incentive to retain part-timers within the institution.

- Opportunities for promotion are limited or nonexistent; accepting part-time employment in the hope of advance to a higher position is likely to be frustrated.
- Part-timers are not full-fledged members of their employing departments; less than twenty-eight percent receive *pro rata* pay and facilities and opportunities to participate are inadequate. (Tuckman 88, 110)

The social implications for part-timers are no less encouraging. Without other employment, they probably have inadequate coverage for fringe benefits. As a consequence, they may find themselves poorly prepared for retirement or illness. The shift to part-time positions in four-year institutions will reduce academic research since these positions offer no opportunity for paid research. On the other hand, this "labor pool represents a growing potential source of new faculty supply should the shortages predicted by some researchers develop in the full-time market" (Tuckman 110-11). Franklin notes that "an increasingly large, haphazardly gathered faculty is on the point of becoming a permanent part of the instructional staff for a substantial proportion of the undergraduate students . . ." (18).

It should be emphasized that while *there* are part-timers for whom such an arrangement is desirable, the greater numbers are working under these conditions involuntarily.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE BENEFITS OF A PART-TIME FACULTY

It is obvious that no one argues against the use of *all* part-time faculty (CPEC, *Planning* 25; Twigg 5). Clearly, there are practical reasons for such an arrangement. Classes that are specialized and require high-tech individuals who are not always available or are not essential to the regular program are well served by part-time experts. For example, a course in laser optics is extremely specialized. Or a college might use resources in the community by having the limited services of a published author in a creative writing class (Twigg 5; Franklin 15). This academic use of nonacademic resources could have a "very positive impact on the quality of

instruction in the United States." Following the model of medical schools that hire outstanding specialists to lecture part-time offers a blend of familiarity and practical experience. But policies should be established to "encourage the broader community to hire persons of this caliber" (Tuckman 11). Institutions of higher learning enrich the quality and diversity of such a cost-efficient resource as their students work under outstanding instructors whose primary employment is outside academe. Practical options are currently less viable: beginning a career in postsecondary teaching or obtaining extra income (Koltai "Part-Time").

Another benefit of hiring part-timers is curricular flexibility. Being able to schedule classes at out-of-the-way places or at odd hours has enabled the colleges to reach new populations (Twigg 5; Harris 15; Miller 8). Flexibility also involves hiring practices that meet affirmative action guidelines for women and minorities and that allow the screening of potential candidates for full-time positions (Miller 8).

As enrollments fluctuate, institutions can respond appropriately (Franklin 15). Since financing is limited, community colleges especially "can not afford to hire tenured instructors for every new development that comes down the road. Education is only as good as its ability to change with the times. When certain courses are no longer in demand, they must be replaced with classes for which there *is* demand" (Koltai "King Solomon" 20). Mingle cautions that "[t]he monitoring of tenure density has become a key ingredient in institutional planning during a period of retrenchment, so that managers may know the degree of flexibility that exists and can make appropriate changes" (59) in adapting to declining enrollments and changing needs. However, one part-timer notes that relying on a two-tier system is not flexibility when "[t]he majority of part-timers, experts in our respective disciplines, have taught the same classes for years" (Lewis).

The most obvious benefit to be had from relying on part-timers is economical. As financial restrictions dictate, staff can be increased or reduced. Mingle, representing the administrative point of view, states that the expertise, the economic factor, and the short-term commitment make the role of the part-timer significant as a "means of reducing costs and of increasing institutional flexibility in the face of possible retrenchment" (64).

However, part-timers generate the same state funds as full-timers in public schools. As Lewis notes, "The economic lifeblood of all public schools (ADA) is . . . [the same], regardless of the status of teachers. Thus, college districts can show a 'profit' by employing more part-timers." In California, the community colleges receive equal funding from the state for all credit contact hours of instruction by part- and full-time faculty. Including fringe benefits paid to tenured faculty, part-timers receive about fifty-five percent of full-time compensation. Including salaries and benefits, the hourly compensation difference between a class hour taught by a full-timer as opposed to non-tenured faculty in 1987 was $51 ($77 - $26) (Chancellor's Office 25, 36, 42).

Short-term contractual obligations provide an opportunity for saving money as

> the part-time people are let go and courses or programs that they staffed are dropped or are picked up by regular faculty. But--in two-year colleges particularly--the part-time instructors may be highly qualified specialists, so their loss may mean the loss of a critical course or program. [In this scenario] full-time tenured faculty are institutional hostages to fortune and part-time faculty are a form of insurance against adversity." (Mingle 40-41)

Warme views this situation from a more emotional point of view: "It is an irony not lost on full-time faculty that the university, an organization ostensibly devoted to excellence, has made a trade-off between financial savings and protection of quality" (208). Twigg is even more incensed by the situtation where "the lack of operating funds in an essential industry is made up by disenfranchising and impoverishing half or more of the absolutely essential skilled workers" (5).

Some of the powerlessness of the part-timers has been counteracted by union efforts although these have led to new administrative problems. Instituting seniority provisions has limited the flexibility benefit of part-timers. Increased pay scales have reduced the economic savings for institutions, but now there is new risk of making adjunct faculty more costly and, therefore, less attractive. Finally, there is increasing pressure

to provide equity for part-timers as they become a permanent feature of the economy (Warme 210).

To summarize, the part-time faculty has the opportunity to earn extra income, and the special needs of some students are accommodated. While this arrangement primarily benefits the administration economically, the long-term consequences are even more costly. Because of an expected slight increase in the number of high-school graduates who will enter college and the increased enrollment of older and part-time students, "enrollment in higher education is projected to decline only 0.8 percent [from 1988 to 1991] . . . . [So] the myth of a decline can no longer be used as an argument for hiring part-timers," and a part-time staff of 37% is too large (Denham 1).

Recognizing the Problems of a Part-Time Faculty

According to Ernst and McFarland, problems arise when part-timers are unfamiliar with their institution's mission, philosophies, and academic policies. It is difficult to mold the two into a cohesive college faculty. The authors also note that coordinating course content, developing uniform standards for student performance, and establishing continuity of instruction are issues not easily addressed (qtd. in Miller 6).

Recognizing these problems, the Modern Language Association issued a statement in 1985 that the situation, rather than increasing academic quality, is "threatening departmental integrity, professional standards, and academic excellence . . . [M]ost part-time appointments are not made for educationally sound reasons."

One area where problems with a large part-time staff inevitably occur is at the departmental level. Fragmentation results if there is no real or continuous contact between the part- and full-timers. The adjunct faculty are likely to be present only during their teaching hours, and there is a sense of mutual unease that both groups inhabit "different worlds" (Warme 206). As a result, there is a workload differential that creates considerable conflict. While the only justification for the differences in pay is this "variance of workload . . . [i]t is also one of the sources of dissatisfaction

among the beneficiaries of that economy, the full-time faculty . . . The price . . . paid . . . is to bear an increasing proportion of administrative, advising, and university service functions" (Miller 8).

It is generally agreed that when the number of student credit hours generated by part-timers exceeds thirty percent, institutions are managed less effectively. In these circumstances, an insufficient full-time staff is unable to provide the necessary curricular and instructional control with the result that programs and courses suffer (Harris 15).

Twigg identifies five additional departmental problems related to relying heavily on part-timers:

- Permanent members help train adjuncts with no additional pay. But the part-timers may not be offered a class in the same institution the following semester. Then the training of new adjuncts begins. Generally, it is only the hope of employment that keeps them in one location, and even then they are often passed over when a regular position becomes available.
- Permanent faculty are responsibile for the quality of education, but they have no voice in the number of classes taught by part-timers or in the selection of them.
- When part-timers fail in their responsibilities by quitting or doing a poor job, the regular faculty must absorb their failure.
- Regular faculty are morally compromised as they are forced to condone the practice of sitting passively by and watching the gross injustice of part-timers being paid at one-third of what they themselves earn.
- Staffing with part-timers limits the opportunities for tenured faculty. Since 1970 full-time positions have been scarce. Since then such positions have been even more scarce. (6)

The problem is much worse in many English departments, especially in lower-division writing courses, where the percentage of part-timers and temporary faculty is higher than in other areas. (Denham 1). The hiring history in the LAVC English Department since 1976 illustrates the situation. In 1976, one full-time person was hired. Then there were no tenure-track hirings for ten years. The last four years show a gradual change in that situation: 1986--1 position; 1987--2; 1988--1; 1989--4. The abrupt

increase in 1989 can be explained by the increasing need for instructors to teach English as a Second Language. (This newly recognized discipline remains part of the LAVC English Department.)

Clausen traces the worsening situation where English departments typically teach every student in the university but only once or twice and then in courses that have little in common with the rest of the English curriculum. The movement to separate literature from freshman composition created a faculty reluctant to teach the basic courses. With the funding crises of the 1970s, too few supplementary resources were available, and the academic job market collapsed. In addition,the numbers of freshmen needing basic writing classes increased, and recruiting part-timers to fill the gap cheaply became expedient. This situation was especially conducive to a two-tier faculty (4). Considering that the second tier has a low professional standing, what is particularly ironic, according to the Modern Language Association, is that part-timers' "frequent assignment to composition . . . courses diminishes the importance of these basic courses at a time when society recognizes a need for special attention to this part of the curriculum."

To further exacerbate the situation, many full-time teachers, especially at the university level, perceive lower-level classes as not being worth their time, of being easy to teach, and of requiring little or no expertise on their part. But, in fact, these courses require far more pedagogical expertise and skill than teaching more advanced subjects may require. Even at the community colleges the literature classes are taught by full-timers while part-timers teach the majority of the basic writing courses. For Spring 1990, the following numbers illustrate the typical situation in the LAVC English Department*. The basic writing courses (English 21, 28, and 101) show a forty-seven to fifty-three percent ratio of full- to part-time; the literature classes show a ninety-six to four percent ratio; the ESL classes have a fifty to fifty percent ratio.

English Course	Full-Time Sections	Part-Time Sections	Ratio FT/PT
English 21 (developmental grammar)	7	8	47%-53%
English 28 (basic writing)	7	13	35%-55%
English 101 (freshmencomposition)	19	16	54%-46%
TOTAL CLASSES	33	37	47%-53%
English 102--291 (literature courses)	25	1	96%-4%
ESL 83-87 (English as a Second Language)	9	9	50%-50%

*Source: LAVC Class Schedule, Spring 1990
19 regular and 19 FTE

However, dealing with part-time faculty requires increased resources that narrow the cost advantage. For example, in 1989 the LAVC English Department elected a vice-chair responsible for the hiring, scheduling, orienting, and evaluating of part-timers. With approximately forty-five to fifty-five part-timers teaching from one semester to the next, and not always the same individuals, the vice-chair has what amounts to a full-time responsibility. The cost of that position is approximately $8000 per year. In addition, last year the department presented three staff-development classes in basic courses at a total cost of approximately $3600.

Another situation illustrates how a full-time faculty helps support a part-time staff both financially and intangibly. To help reduce the uncompensated burden on the part-timers of reading assigned compositions, the full-time members of the English Department voluntarily agreed by a majority vote several years ago to "share" their reader time with the part-time instructors of writing classes. For 1989-90, the reader budget was $20,931. At $7.25 per hour of reader time, there were 2887 hours for the year. Previously nineteen full-timers divided these hours among their writing courses (averaging seventy hours of reader time per semester). Those same hours are now divided among thirty-six instructors, seventeen of whom are part-timers. During Spring 1990, part-timers were allocated 349 hours ($2526) or 25% of the budget. Their average allotment was 21 hours, or approximately 1 1/2 hours per week. At the end of the academic year, the department as a whole was overbudget by 534 hours, suggesting that those instructors using readers need more time. The regular instructors were over by 420.2 hours; part-timers exceeded their allotment by 113.8 hours. Had the regular faculty not shared its budget, the excess would have been limited to 185 hours or $1341 instead of costing $3872. Thus the full-time faculty helps to support the part-time staff at a financial cost to itself at the same time that it increases its own workload.

But it is not only the departments and their full-time members that experience problems. With part-time instructors, students often are served by individuals who "lack basic knowledge concerning institutional policies and procedures, [and] problems, ranging from financial aid to career counseling . . . [The information is] either not communicated or [is] miscommunicated to the students" (Harris 15). When one considers that a part-timer may be involved with teaching at three separate institutions in three different districts, the likelihood of such problems is understandable.

Warme conducted a study at the university level to determine student perceptions about part-time versus tenured instructors. The results indicated that the majority of students were unaware of the status of their professors or were indifferent to the distinction. She found no significant difference in the way students rated their instructors' overall competence. What negative comments she gathered focused on the limited opportunities for meeting with part-time professors outside class hours (210-11).

A question to raise is "whether part-time faculty members' characteristics differentiate them from their full-time counterparts in a way which adversely affects the educational environment" (Miller 8). In basic subjects at the community-college level, Friedlander points out that "[t]o date, few if any studies have been conducted to determine whether, in general, students who enroll in courses taught by adjunct faculty receive instruction inferior to that offered by full-time instructors" (28).

However, statistics collected from holistically scored department reading and writing examinations held each semester by the LAVC English Department suggest that these students do **not** perform at the same level as their counterparts in sections taught by full-timers. Noting that seventy percent (twenty-five sections) of English 28 in the Fall 1989 semester and sixty-five percent (thirteen sections) in the Spring 1990 were taught by part-timers increases the significance of the results in the table below.

English 28 Holistically Scored Examination

	Fall 1989	Spring 1990
Number of students	625	400
Full-timers' average score*	8.37	7.44
Part-timers' average score*	8.25	7.30

*Scored on a scale of 12 with at least two readings scored on a scale of 6. Score of 7 not allowed and resolved by a third reading. For Fall 1989 most scores were recorded in 8,9,and 10 range and are significant to .05 level of confidence. Scores for Spring 1990 are significant to .10 level of confidence.

The implications are that students are the ones who lose. Most of them at the majority of California community colleges are academically weak, come from other cultures, and/or have special needs. These are the students requiring the most help, yet "[t]hose enrolled, unwittingly, in a

part-time [basic English] class can't claim extra tutelage or counseling that they can from a full-timer" (Lewis).

Because of the demands of other employment, part-timers may be unable or unprepared or unwilling to give necessary attention to these students and so make fewer writing assignments (Gappa 10). The danger with this reaction is greater than might be immediately apparent. When part-timers reduce course requirements arbitrarily or in ignorance or in anger, they risk a department's integrity and jeopardize the courses it offers. For example, the 8000-word requirement in freshman composition is an articulated agreement between the community colleges and the University of California so long as students transferring to that institution are functioning successfully. If they are unprepared for upper-division work and the University decides that these students have not been prepared by the feeder institution, it has the power to cancel the agreement and refuse to accept the course credit that the student has earned. In that case, no one is well served--not the feeder school, the receiving institution, the department, or the students.

While the continuing reliance on part-time faculty is detrimental to the institution, full-time colleagues, and students, the part-timers themselves are the ones who are exploited. Curzon-Brown calls the system of "hiring and paying part-time instructors . . . a disgrace" (195) even though there really is no system. A better description might be a "totally shabby exploitation of people" (198). For involuntary part-timers there is a "negative impact on self-image, earnings, career satisfaction, and prospects" (Warme 207). Denham notes that they earn too little, receive only short-term commitments from their institutions, wander from job to job, and often obtain appointments at the last minute (1).

Now there is some employment security for part-timers in the California community colleges. Seniority lists have been established so that hiring is not at the discretion of a chair, dean, or department. But those long-time part-timers at one institution will most likely not find full-time employment there because "long-term membership in a disadvantaged group leads to stigmatization" (Warme 203).

Combining "relative" security with inadequate pay effectively isolates and alienates involuntary adjunct faculty from the profession that

they have unwittingly chosen. Figures indicates that they can expect to earn about twenty-five to thirty-five percent of regular faculty. Fringe benefits are rarely offered (Franklin 16). The *Supplemental Report on Academic Salaries, 1987-88*, gives the mean salary estimate of regular faculty as $40,046. In California community colleges, "the differences in mean salaries between the ten highest paying districts and ten lowest paying of all seventy districts . . . [are] at least twenty-five percent . . . . [O]n a statewide basis, full-time faculty earn about twice as much per weekly faculty contact hour as part-time faculty" (CPEC 1).

The *Supplemental Report* notes that there is general agreement that temporary faculty are needed to allow the community colleges to respond to changing demographics and offer courses requiring special expertise. However, it also indicates that administrations have become increasingly dependent in this area as part-timers commute and receive no fringe benefits and only one-half the compensation of full-time members.

Not only are part-timers adversely impacted by hourly rate pay, but also students, colleges, and communities are affected. Part-time faculty are not compensated for class preparation, student conferences, or writing and grading of examinations outside class. Instead they are paid only for their physical presence in the classroom (Boyer 38). Currently in the Los Angeles Community College District the highest rate is approximately $35 per hour. A quick calculation suggests that someone teaching six hours per week for two semesters (forty weeks) can expect to earn $8400. If this instructor can physically piece together an 18-hour schedule with two other campuses, then perhaps (s)he can earn about $25,200 (minus any fringe benefits) for the academic year. Whether those positions are available at hours that coordinate with each other is another predicament.

Since non-tenured faculty are not paid for class preparations or professional growth activities, the implication to the part-timer is that these are worthless. Boyer is one of many who says that "[c]ommunity college teachers should receive pay that is commensurate with the services they are expected to perform" (39). The National Education Association in 1987 passed a resolution stating that "[p]art-time faculty should receive the same salary and fringe benefits as full-time faculty prorated according to workload" (qtd. in Benjet 40).

Conditions relating to professionalism and remuneration damage the morale and self-image. One response is to hope vainly that the lucky individual will somehow be "elevated into the heaven of full-timerhood" (Curzon-Brown 197). Another is to become cynical and stingy about giving time to students, papers, and administrative requests. Lewis expresses a typical perception: "Think of working for the Los Angeles Community College District for twenty-two years and never being able to vote for department chair, serve on a committee, or serve effectively." Other instructors try to avoid controversy and convey instead an attitude of discontent. This inferior status and the limitations on becoming permanent affect the morale of the part-timers and may also "ultimately contaminate the university community at large" (Warme 206).

Because adjunct instructors are not eligible for research support at universities, few contribute to this part of academic life. Thus they are a "short-time convenience" because of their hidden costs and the inability of the institution to provide basic services. These include lower scholarly productivity, excessive course loads which impair the quality of teaching, and limited accessibility to students for normal advising. Other costs include no time to engage in administrative tasks like governance, committee work, curriculum development, and long-range planning, and public service activities (Warme 208-209; Tuckman 111-12). Consequently, part-time faculty remain "anchorless, enjoy little privilege or status, and depend on chance employment" (Denham 2). One educator even suggests that the issue of part-time faculty members' freedom is involved. "Academic freedom is rooted in tenure and constitutes a major rationale for it. Therefore, in the absence of the security that tenure guarantees, academic freedom is inherently undermined" (Warme 207).

Added to the preceding problems that relying on part-timers creates is the negative impact on the quality of education. On the surface, that quality would seem to be comparable because both the full- and part-timer hold the same teaching credentials, perform the same instructional activities of meeting classes, giving lectures, interacting with students, and assigning grades; therefore, the instruction delivered should be the same (Friedlander 28).

Educational quality is affected when instruction by part-time faculty is not similar to that of full-time faculty. Three nationwide surveys conducted in 1975, 1977, and 1978 by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges, under grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Science Foundation, found that instruction was **not** similar.

- Part-timers have less teaching experience, have taught fewer years at their current institution, hold lower academic credentials.
- Part timers have less choice in the selection of course materials, assign fewer pages to read, use less instructional media, recommend or require students to attend fewer out-of-class activities, place less emphasis on written assignments in determining grades.
- Part-timers are less aware of campus events, less likely to have access to instructional support services and contact outside class with students, colleagues, and administrators.
- Part-timers read fewer journals, are less likely to be members of professional associations or attend/participate in professional meetings. (qtd. in Friedlander 34)

The previous issue of remuneration--or "getting what you pay for"--deserves further analysis here in light of the concern with quality. A typical freshman composition class at Los Angeles Valley College has a tally limit of forty students with a word requirement of 8000 words per semester. If each student produced that amount, an instructor would read approximately 320,000 words for one class. Lowering the number of students in a class to the department average of thirty-three WSCH reduces the total output to 264,000 words. If the average assignment is five hundred words, the instructor will read 528 papers during the semester. At an average ten minutes per essay (a very rapid rate), the instructor reads 5280 minutes or 88 hours for that course. With eighteen weeks of classes, an instructor spends five hours per week--all unpaid--grading papers for one class. A slower or more careful reader who takes twenty minutes per essay would spend ten hours a week grading papers. Other considerations of preparation and conference time are not part of the equation.

In addition to subsidizing the expansion of the curriculum and meeting special interests and preferences of students, part-timers are heavily involved in the teaching of core courses at two-year institutions. It is ironic that the attempt to increase the quality of instruction by hiring outside specialists may be undermined or compromised when part-timers are hired to teach core courses--basic writing skills, introduction to composition, freshman composition.

The ADE wanted to know the answer to the question "What are the effects on our academic programs of using large numbers of part-time instructors?" In 1983-84, ADE conducted a survey of a permanent sample of 527 English departments and confirmed that economically "consolidating part-time into full-time faculty positions is a better investment because full-time faculty contributed to the institutional environment in ways that go beyond teaching courses." The survey demonstrated a correlation between varying ratios of full- to part-time faculty and a department's ability to attract majors, grant undergraduate degrees in the field, and engage in outreach and collaborative projects (qtd. in Franklin 16).

The unfair and discriminatory practices of continuously hiring part-timers for full workloads with no institutional commitment has given way, as the result of legal action, to the equally unfair and discriminatory practices of limiting the number of courses part-timers are able to teach at one institution. Both practices have had psychological costs that effect the educational quality of an institution. One must ask whether the legal practices are any more fair now that part-timers must deal with the stress of trying to make a living by piecing together a full workload; that department chairs must cope with the stress of covering large numbers of classes; that students must accept last-minutes adjuncts who are not always fully qualified (Twigg 6)?

Reordering Priorities

The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) acknowledges that "the quality of the faculty is synonymous with the quality of the program" (*Planning* 1). The Joint Committee for Review of

the Master Plan in California has called for "greater controls over the use of part-time faculty" (qtd. in CPEC, *Preparing* 168). But recognizing higher education's reliance on part-time faculty is not the same as working to resolve the problems it creates. The options separate into two broad areas: stopping the practice in specific areas and retaining the system with important modifications.

Reordering priorities is essential. The most important priority, if quality of education is the goal, involves replacing the practice in specific areas. Another way to view this option is to see it as using part-timers only in a limited and selective way, as was originally intended. An important question that needs to be studied is, "Given a limited budget, is it more educationally sound to offer fewer basic/core courses taught by full-time instructors or more such courses taught by both full- and part-time?"

While specialized areas might be well served by outside experts or adjunct faculty might be truly necessary in an emergency situation, explicit limitations need to be identified. One important consideration, for example, is how many students are being served by the experts. Where core courses like math, English, and English as a second language--which service large numbers of students on a regular and continuing basis--rely on part-timers, there must be a firm commitment to consolidate positions and hire full-time faculty within a set time frame.

For example, with an average WSCH of thirty-three in all English classes at the end of the Spring 1990 semester in the LAVC English Department, approximately 3800 students in basic and core courses were served in 115 sections. That number is a conservative estimate because it does not reflect the fewer number of students taking the fourteen literature classes which require only a minimum of eight or fifteen students to be offered and which, therefore, effectively lower the department's WSCH of thirty-three.

A second priority would be to retain the system with important modifications in non-core course area. Where a part-time situation must continue, part-timers in community colleges can become more effective by working together with the administration to improve the system. These changes should systematically address hiring practices and employment conditions.

Some of the following hiring practices could be instituted or reinforced to develop or strengthen proficiency in part-time teachers.

- Develop a pool of qualified applicants (Gappa 98).
- Hire through an organized, selection committee process only those who are fully qualified to teach credit courses (Boyer 38; Ashworth 15; Twigg 10).
- Hire temporary faculty at least four months prior to service. Modify budget practices where necessary so that class schedules can list instructors by name rather than as "Staff" (Boyer 38; Talbott 695).
- Generate and distribute information about policies, procedures, employment practices and their impact on student learning and the organization (Talbott 695; Albert and Watson 79).
- Develop a contract that articulates the instructor's requirements and specifies his/her rights (Gappa 98).
- Develop a meaningful orientation process at the institutional level that involves division heads, full-time faculty, workshops, and tours (Ashworth 15).
- Offer a department-level orientation including a handbook and instructional information about teaching methods, course syllabi, and college resources in order to improve management practices (Boyer 33; Albert and Watson 79).
- Avoid offering classes unless qualified instructors have already been retained (Twigg 10).

Improving employment conditions is an important part of staff development when the part-timer is already part of the system. Following are some specific suggestions in that area.

- Recognize part-timers' professional status and important contributions. Possibilities might include a teaching chair or competition and salary incentives.
- Create a mentor system within the department, discipline, or campus (Wilson 7; Boyer 38).
- Include part-timers in faculty governance and department deliberations with regard to curriculum, courses, and teaching materials (Gappa 99).

- Provide support services, including office space, telephones, and reprographic and secretarial help so part-timers can perform their duties professionally (Wilson 9; Albert and Watson 79).
- Strengthen staff development and in-service programs and other opportunities for professional development: workshops, credit courses, and access to funds/programs (Ashworth 15; Gappa 99).
- Enhance the evaluation process by developing a system to improve teaching effectiveness. This could include multiple sources of information: peer, self- and student evaluations, classroom observations, artifact collection, informal sources of student comments and complaints, and video techniques (Boyer 33, 38).
- Provide supervision and support to continue the orientation experience and integrate previous activities (Ashworth 15).

Admittedly, trying to improve the hiring practices and employment conditions of part-timers addresses the symptoms but not the fundamental problem. According to Franklin, "If the only attempt is to improve the lot of part-time instructors, all we do is institutionalize a practice that put them permanently in a marginal labor pool" (19). Mingle summarizes the necessity for caution in the strategy of having a reserve of part-time faculty:

> it must be implemented under *very controlled conditions, with "quality of programs" as the chief goal* [italics mine] . . . . [There are] problems and possible inequities in the creation of a large, permanent part-time staff of instructors who may be personally and professionally alienated from the institution--and perhaps from their profession and from society. (41)

When departments hire many adjuncts to teach regularly offered classes, the administration should be pressured to open up full-time positions (Twigg 10). Departments where a recurring need has not changed in years and is even less likely to change in the future must pressure the administration to eliminate the two-tier system. Areas like math, English, and English as a second language come immediately to mind. Arguing that the quality of education is harmed can be proven. Arguing that the morality of the situation is untenable is more difficult to prove but no less real a dilemma. If the basic issue is lack of funds, perhaps it would be more

ethical to offer such classes to fewer students than to assign those classes to unqualified or exploited part-timers. The consequence of having an "exploited and resentful minority to inspire our next generation" (Twigg 10) is a consideration to be carefully assessed.

Where a continuing need for full-time temporaries (aka permanent part-timers) exists, creating more stable working conditions and permanent relationships is important (Talbott 695). Albert and Watson suggest that maintaining a permanent part-time system, where instructors would be alike in every way except amount of time worked, would benefit working parents and enhance the professionalism of the part-timer (75). Under these conditions, part-timers would receive equal compensation, cost of living adjustments, fringe benefits, and job security appropriate to their classification (Gappa 99; Twigg 10).

Denham contends that converting part-time positions to full-time temporaries does not deal with the problem directly. He makes some strong recommendations that include the following.

- Show to deans and provosts how an increasingly large body of part-time instructors damages the image and reputation of our institutions, fuels attrition, gives ammunition to parties ready to embarrass administrations by showing evidence of mismanagement, and contributes to the poor quality of instruction. This is an institutional, not a departmental, issue.
- Convince accrediting bodies that the health of our educational programs requires a radical decrease in the number of part-time teachers.
- Not approve additional curriculum requirements if they are not accompanied by staffing and funding plans.
- Appeal to state legislators and boards of trustees to mandate minimum benefits.
- Rather than attack curricular reform, direct energies toward solving the part-time problem because the solution is likely to lead to greater improvements in the quality of higher education. Calls for accountability in higher education have not been directed at this problem. They should be. (2)

Conclusion

Part-timers have been a "significant force in recent years" (Miller 6) and are likely to be in the future. CPEC forecasts that between 1988 and 2005, there will be a forty percent growth in undergraduate enrollment. The California Community Colleges will grow by forty percent, the California State University by thirty percent, and the University of California by forty-eight percent. These increases mean that more faculty will be needed. But the Commission warns that faculty planning is important, and efforts should begin now to develop clear hiring policies to meet the needs and commitments of "diversity, equity, and excellence" (*Planning* 1).

The outlook for more faculty, then, is encouraging. The CPEC report on *Planning* projects that of 10,400 tenure-track faculty, adding an average 612 new hires per year from now through 2005-06 will be essential to meet the University of California's long-term needs. These numbers assume that the university will reduce its reliance on temporary non-tenured faculty by lowering the proportion of temporary faculty from approximately twenty percent of the current total to approximately fifteen percent in 2005.

In the community colleges, the preliminary projections estimate a total faculty hiring from 1990 to 2005 at 22,205 FTE. Of this number, according to CPEC, 12,347 vacancies are expected in order to replace the existing faculty, and the remaining 9858 will result from enrollment growth (3-5). Clearly, the number of part-time faculty and their proper role in community college staffing will be a key issue of faculty quality during this time (CPEC, *Supplemental* 16).

In *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century*, CPEC recommends that the "heavy reliance on part-time faculty" be reduced and that they be "incorporat[ed] . . . into the collegial faculty process" (36) although it did not specify how those suggestions might be accomplished. The Modern Language Assocation also recommends that new and real efforts to eliminate the excessive use of part-timers be made. One of its guidelines is for each department to develop a long-range plan that clarifies the use of both temporary and permanent part-time teachers in terms of the department's

needs and goals. This plan should include limiting the number of part-timers in relation to full-timers. According to Franklin, in two-year colleges the numbers may be too large and the financial implications too severe to convert part-time positions to tenure-track directly. Some type of phased conversion would be necessary (19).

California Assembly Bill 1725 holds promise for teachers beginning their careers. The "landmark reform measure" grants more than $140 million to California's 107 community colleges with up to 1500 teachers slated for tenure. If there were a real opportunity for permanence in and commitment from the system, part-timers might be inclined to contribute their energy and expertise to it, without reservation.

That part-timers supposedly lack professionalism might be a *result* of not finding a permanent position rather than a reason for their being part-timers. When a position is available, often the rationale for not hiring a part-timer is that if (s)he were as good as the regular faculty (s)he would already have found a permanent job, but because (s)he is less professional, (s)he should not be offered the permanent position. Promotion from within the ranks of part-timers would be a way to encourage professionalism.

The short-term savings of a part-time faculty have long-term costs. The latter include discouraging substantive involvement, institutionalizing a two-tiered system, increasing responsibility for full-time faculty, lessening the reputation of an institution, and undermining the quality of education it can provide. (CPEC, ***Supplemental*** 16; Denham 2; Warme 203).

Both Miller and Tuckman separately urge that the subject of the part-time faculty be researched because part-timers promise to be a major labor market with impact on higher education about which not much is known. At this time, CPEC is preparing such a study in California. Its goal is to establish a basis of fact about part-time faculty that can form the foundation for policy discussion about the use of this resource. It will focus on such issues as teaching policies, compensation, and opportunities as a prelude to permanency among others (***Planning*** 25).

Perhaps, then, the issue is not one of lack of commitment to the profession but the greater need to survive financially. The relationship between part-time faculty and adminstrations has been called a "cruel farce" and "shabby exploitation" (Curzon-Brown (197, 198). The part-

timers suffer from "second-class" and "underclass status" (Warme 206; Benjet 41). This rhetoric polarizes the problem when another analogy might suggest a therapeutic view of the situation: the institution and the part-timers are involved in a co-dependent relationship. Both parties need each other but must work together to develop a mutual respect. The co-dependent or "caretaker" suffers from low self-esteem while the stronger member has needs that must be met. As a minority, part-timers should have a right to opportunity but, like other vulnerable groups, they need protection, recognition, and respect, not insensitivity, indifference, or isolation.

Resolving the part-time issue is fundamentally an economic problem. Although the basic decisions that need to be made appear educationally sound and straighforward, implementing them is extremely complex. Cooperation on the part of faculties, administrators, state legislature, and boards of trustees is essential. Needless to say, opposition can be expected from part-timers who would not be hired as full-timers, departments that felt their numbers should be increased or not reduced, administrators who would rather follow other priorities in allocating the money needed for basic education courses, and the taxpayers who will penultimately have to bear the cost.

But the deteriorating situation will not improve by itself. "No matter how dedicated and responsible part-time teachers are, the practice of hiring, year after year, large numbers of transient workers to teach courses central to an undergraduate education has already damaged higher education and will continue to do so" (Franklin 15). Ultimately, society in general will pay the price as its members are increasingly ill-equipped because of inadequate skills to contribute their share economically. Preparing individuals for a productive life is part of higher education's responsibility, and by providing equal access to *quality* education, through a qualified, respected, committed full-time faculty, society is addressing that obligation.

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